First Hebrew Shakespeare Translations

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Scene I  A street in Verona (Meraioth, Benaih, and attendants)

Benaiah  Please, Meraioth, my friend, come, let us return home

Behold, the heat of the day is great, and the Abiels are all around outside

And if we meet them, they will stir up quarrel and strife.  For the heat will boil their blood and strike them with madness.

Meraioth  You are like one of the men who come to the winehouse

There he hangs his sword on the peg, telling it, relax and be silent

Yet before he has emptied the cup into his mouth twice

He arises like a soldier and draws his sword against the pourer of his drink.

Benaiah  Am I like this soldier?

Meraioth  You are quick to anger, like one of the Italians

Your heart grows hot in your anger, and you become angry when your heart grows hot.

Benaiah  And what else is under your tongue?

1 Hab. 1:3.
2 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. There is no precedent for this in Shakespeare’s ‘brawl/stirring’ (3.1.3–4).
3 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.5–9).
4 In Hebrew this is a pun on ‘empties’ in the previous line, as the same verb means ‘empty’ and ‘draw a sword’.
5 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.11–13).
6 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘as any in Italy’ (3.1.12); Salkinson’s phrasing suggests that he intends the characters in his translation to be understood as Italian Jews (with their biblical names, Hebrew speech, and Jewish customs), as opposed to the non-Jewish Italians referred to here.
7 Deut. 19:6 ‘while his heart is hot’ (i.e., while angry).
If there were two like you, not even one would remain
For one man would seize his fellow's side and they would both die at once.
Why, you would quarrel with one man because he has
One more hair in his beard, or one less than you;
With another you would quarrel because he cracked a nut
On the grounds that your eye looks like that nut;
Like an egg full of yolk, so your head is full of quarrels
Even though your head has been struck and beaten like an egg yolk in your quarrels;
Once you grumbled at an elderly wayfarer
Because with his sneezes he woke your dog who was sleeping on the street;
You caused anguish to a certain tailor with words that go down into the innermost parts of the belly
And what was his crime? That he wore a new cloth tunic
And did not save it for Passover. And moreover you did not pardon a shoemaker
Because he tied his old shoes with a new lace And you are the man who comes to instruct me

8 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.15–32).
9 Prov. 18:8 'חַדְרֵי בָֽטֶן יָרְדוּ וְהֵם' and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly'; also Prov. 26:22.
10 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Easter' (3.1.28). Passover falls at the same time of year as and is the historical setting for Easter; as such it is an appropriate domesticating translation choice.
To desist from quarrel and contention?\(^{11}\)

BENAIOTH\(^{12}\) If I too were a man of strife like yourself

No man would give a homer of barley\(^{13}\) for the length of my life

For my time would not last longer than a handbreadth\(^{14}\) and a quarter.

MERAIOOTH A homer of barley\(^{15}\) for an ass.\(^{16}\)

BENAIOTH By the life of my head! Indeed the Abiels are coming.

MERAIOOTH By the life of my foot! Indeed I do not fear them.

(Tubal and his men)

TUBAL Follow me and I shall speak with these men –

May you be well, honourable men! I have a word for one of you.

MERAIOOTH Only one word? And only for one of us?

Add something to the one word

Say a short word and strike a great blow.

TUBAL I am prepared to act in accordance with your word, if you give me a pretext.

MERAIOOTH Why can’t you find a pretext for yourself, without me delivering it to your hand?

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11 Isa. 58:4.
12 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.30–2).
13 Lev. 27:16; Hosea 3:2. A homer is a biblical measurement equivalent to approximately 394 litres.
14 A biblical measurement equivalent to approximately 9cm.
15 Lev. 27:16; Hosea 3:2. A homer is a biblical measurement equivalent to approximately 394 litres.
16 This is a pun based on the sound correspondence between homer ‘barley’ and hamor ‘ass’.
17 Salkinson is echoing Shakespeare’s wordplay ‘The fee-simple? O simple!’ (3.1.33).
18 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.38–9).
19 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.42–3).
I hear Ram’s tunes from your mouth; do you assist him?

And if you do not dance, I shall turn your dancing to mourning.21

Come, let us depart from here to a quiet place

And quietly present your arguments and grievances there without restraint

Or depart, each man to his house, for the eyes of all the people are upon us.

Eyes were given to the people to look, so why should they not look in accordance with their desire?

On account of the people’s eyes and ears, I shall not depart.

(ram enters)

Go in peace, my lord; behold, I have found my lad there.

May the king of terrors23 take me if this lad is your attendant

Except when you go forth to battle; then he goes forth after you

As a lad after his master.

Why, you know, Ram, that I hate you with a deathly hatred

20 This speech is prose in the original (3.1.45–8).
21 Lam. 5:15 מְחֹלֵֽנוּ לְאֵ֖בֶל נֶהְפַּ֥ךְ ‘our dancing has turned to mourning’.
22 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds, “consort”!’ (3.1.48); Salkinson has removed the Christian oath.
23 Job 18:14 (an epithet for Death; see Gruber 2004: 1528).
And you shall no longer be called Ram; rather, your name shall be villain. 24

I am willing to love you with a love greater than your hatred.
Therefore I shall calm my wrath and not consider it as an iniquity of yours.

That you have scorned my name, although I am not a villain
Therefore depart in peace, for you do not know who I am.

None of these will benefit you, and I shall not forgive you.
For the evil that you have done to me – draw your sword and come forth.

The matter is not so; I have never done you evil
And moreover my love for you is greater than you reckon

Because you do not know from whom the reason for this love derives.
Know, Abielite, that your name is more precious to me than my name
And therefore I shall wait for you to reconcile yourself with me.

Who surrenders with such scorned and despised humility
The edge of the sword will inform us who is righteous in his quarrel.

24 This word corresponds directly to Shakespeare’s ‘villain’ (3.1.60). It is also the name of a biblical character, the first husband of King David’s wife Abigail (initially mentioned in 1 Samuel 25:3 and appearing throughout 1 Samuel 25); Nabal’s character is in keeping with the name’s meaning.
25 Judg. 9:54; 1 Sam. 31:4; 1 Chron. 10:4.
26 This speech is a modified conflation of two separate English speeches by Mercutio (3.1.72–4 and 76–81, the latter in prose); Salkinson has omitted Tybalt’s intervening line (3.1.75).
Come, valiant warrior, who has struggled with grasshoppers and prevailed. 

Draw – and let us face each other! 

TUBAL
I am coming for you. (They both draw their swords) 

RAM
Meraioth, my friend, desist, put your sword back in its sheath. 

MERAIOTH
Hurry, hasten, Tubal, lest you be stabbed at once. 

(They fight each other) 

RAM
Come, Benaiah, between them; 
knock the weapons from their hand – 

Be ashamed and disgraced by your deeds, do not commit such ignominy 

Tubal! Meraioth! Why are you violating the prince's command 

Gathering together and waging battle on the streets of Verona? 

Desist, Tubal, let it be, Meraioth my friend. 

(Tubal and his men exit) 

MERAIOTH
I have been struck down. – 

Cursed be both ancestral houses together! I am dying. 

Has he left here and not one of his hairs has fallen to the ground? 

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27 Gen. 32:29 'for you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed'.
28 1 Chron. 21:27 'and he put his sword back in its sheath'.
29 Ezek. 36:32 'be ashamed and disgraced'.
30 This translation follows the Folio version; the Second Quarto has a different stage direction followed by Petruchio's 'Away, Tybalt!' (3.1.90), which does not appear here.
31 1 Kings 1:52 'not one of his hairs will fall to the ground'.

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Benaiah What is this matter, have you been struck down?

Meraioth One scratch in my flesh, a scratch that will cost me my life.\(^{32}\) (To his attendant) Go and call the doctor for me. (The servant exits)

Ram Please be courageous, Meraioth; the wound is not great.

Meraioth It is not as deep as a well and it is not as wide as the entrance to the Hall.\(^{34}\)

But it is enough to end my life. Come here and ask tomorrow And you will find me like a silent man who is considered wise.\(^{35}\) The mocker is no more, the mockery is finished – cursed be both ancestral houses!

How can a despicable dog, how can a cat, a rat, or a mouse Make a fatal scratch on a man from which he would die Behold, that dog learned to bark and not to bite But you, the middlemen, when you came between us You helped with your arms to stab me.

Ram My intention was for good.

Meraioth Please bring me, Benaiah, to some house For I am dying – cursed be both your ancestral houses!

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\(^{32}\) Prov. 7:23 וְלֹֽא־יָ֝דַ֗ע 'and he does not know that it will cost him his life'.

\(^{33}\) This speech is prose in the original (3.1.98–105).

\(^{34}\) Mishnah Middot 3:7 אֲלֵהֶם אֶלֹהִים 'the entrance to the Hall' (of the Temple in Jerusalem). Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘church door’ (3.1.99).

\(^{35}\) Prov. 17:28 יֵחָשֵׁב חָכָם מַחֲרִישׁ אֱוִיל גַּם 'even a silent fool is considered wise’.

\(^{36}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Zounds, a dog’ (3.1.102).
They have made my flesh into food for maggots and worms.
And may a sword devour both the houses. – (Benaiah and his servants lead Meraioth off)

RAM
Meraioth, who is kinsman of the Prince’s house and a friend like a brother to me
Was dealt a mortal blow while defending my cause
And Tubal, whom I almost considered my flesh and blood
Maligned my name and besmirched me.

Oh, my beautiful Jael! Your beauty has softened my heart
You have turned the arrow of my might into straw, and the stones of my sling into chaff.

(Benaiah re-enters)

BENAIAH
Ram, Ram my brother! Meraioth has been snatched away before his time
With the strength of his lofty spirit he has split the clouds and ascended
He has scorned dwelling on earth and has made his seat in the heavens.

RAM
The destroyer started with one, but will yet strike down several.

37 Ps. 35:14.
38 Jer. 51:36; ‘I shall defend your cause’.
39 Prov. 5:11; ‘your flesh and body’ (used literally in this verse, but idiomatically in Salkinson’s text).
40 Nah. 3:6; ‘and I shall besmirch you’.
41 Job 15:32.
42 This and the next three lines form two rhyming couplets; cf. Shakespeare’s ‘depend/end’ (3.1.121–2). Salkinson has added an extra two lines to this speech. The reason for this is unclear as the added lines do not appear in the Folio or Quarto versions.
The quiver of time is open, like a belly full of children;
This one has burst forth first, his father’s firstborn son
And the hand of each child is grasping the heel of his brother.  

(Tubal re-enters)

BENAIAH
Behold, Tubal in his fury comes again.

RAM
He lives in his haughtiness, while Meraioth has fallen by the sword –
Depart, compassion, from my eyes; mercy, leave me
I shall don zeal as my garment and in a consuming fire I shall exhaust my wrath –
Tubal! You have reviled me for nothing; say that you regret it
For Meraioth’s soul is still floating over our heads
And waiting until your soul leaves, to keep it company there
For you or I, or both of us together
Shall keep it company momentarily.

TUBAL
Despoiled lad! Behold, you were his friend in life
Therefore in his death, you shall not be separated from him.

RAM
The sword will decide our case.
(They fight each other and Tubal falls)

BENAIAH
Go from here, Ram, flee at once
Behold, the residents of the city are coming and Tubal lies dead.
Do not stand as if stunned – if you are found here
You will surely die today according to the prince's commandment
Arise, flee for your life.⁴⁵, ⁴⁶

Woe to a foolish son⁴⁷ who prospers like me!

Why do you still tarry?
(A crowd of people and city officials)

Which way did he flee, the one who struck Meraioth
He is the murderer Tubal, which way did he flee?⁴⁸

There lies Tubal, the man whom you seek.

Arise, come with me, quick, stand on your feet
Why, I command you in the prince's name.⁴⁹
(The prince with his men, Abiram, Abiel, and their wives with the members of their household)

Who are they that have burst out to wreak destruction on our streets?

Please, my lord prince! I am prepared to tell in the bitterness of my soul⁵¹

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⁴⁵ Gen. 19:17.
⁴⁶ Salkinson's text has no rhyming couplet here, in contrast to Shakespeare's 'away/stay' (3.1.137–8).
⁴⁸ The Hebrew text has no rhyming couplet here, in contrast to Shakespeare's 'he/me' (3.1.140–1).
⁴⁹ The Hebrew text has no rhyming couplet here, in contrast to Shakespeare's 'obey/fray' (3.1.142–3).
⁵⁰ Salkinson has not included any rhyming couplets in this speech, in contrast to Shakespeare's 'all/brawl' and 'Romeo/Mercutio' (3.1.144–5 and 146–7).
⁵¹ Job 7:11, 10:1.
Of the horrors that have been committed from the beginning to the end.

There lies the man whom the lad Ram killed

Because he had killed Meraioth, a mighty man of valour

Who is kin to my lord the prince.

Abiel’s wife

Tubal – Tubal is dead – Tubal, my brother’s son

See, my lord the prince! See, look, my husband!

Oh, there is spilled the blood of my brother’s son, whom I love

Please, my lord! Command according to the greatness of your mercy

And let the blood of the house of Abiram be spilled to atone for this blood.

My brother’s son! – My brother’s son, my flesh and blood!

The prince

Tell me, Benaiah, what happened from beginning to end?

Benaiah

Tubal, who has fallen here, fell by Ram’s hand

That is the same Ram who, when he encountered him, spoke to him tenderly

52 Ruth 2:1.

53 The last word in this line rhymes with the last word in the following two lines, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘child/spilled’ (3.1.148–9) except that the latter is a rhyming couplet. Salkinson may have added the third rhyming line to compensate for the fact that there are no further rhymes in this speech, in contrast to Shakespeare’s ‘true/Montague’ (3.1.150–1) and ‘fray/slay’ (3.1.153–4), the latter split between Capulet’s wife and Benvolio. This discrepancy most likely reflects a difficulty in finding suitable rhymes while maintaining the desired meaning.

54 Num. 14:19.

Saying to relent from a quarrel which has no basis
And that it would be fitting for him to guard himself, so as not to violate the prince’s command
And even though he implored him with a willing spirit and a beseeching tongue
His words fell to the ground, for Tubal in his haste stiffened his neck.
And was like a deaf man; he would not listen to words of peace and truth
And he made the point of his sword fly, tearing the covering of Meraioth’s heart.
And Meraioth too brandished his weapon, weapon against weapon
And stood opposite him like a mighty expert man made without fear
With one of his hands he drove back the one who sought to take his life.
While with his other hand he sought the life of his enemy
But Tubal also drove him back, because he knew how to heed a warning
And meanwhile Ram raised his voice mightily

56 Ps. 51:14 (51:12 in English Bibles).
57 Jer. 19:15 ‘they have stiffened their necks’.
58 Esther 9:30.
59 Ezek. 21:20 (21:15 in English Bibles) ‘the point of the sword’. The meaning of this phrase is uncertain; this translation follows the King James Bible, but other possibilities include ‘the fear of the sword’ (Geneva Bible), ‘the threat of the sword’ (New English Bible), and ‘the glittering sword’ (English Standard Version).
60 Hosea 13:8 ‘and I shall tear open the covering of their heart’.
61 Jer. 50:9.
62 Job 41:25 (41:33 in English Bibles).
63 Ps. 40:15 (40:14 in English Bibles) ‘those who seek to take my life’. 
Ram and Jael

And stood between the fighters to knock the instruments of death from their hand

But then Tubal’s sword struck Meraioth’s living soul

And Tubal saw and fled, but afterwards he returned to Ram

Upon whom the spirit of jealousy had come and who bore a grudge in his heart

Then they both burst forth like lightning, one man against his fellow

And before I could separate them Tubal bowed over and fell down dead.

As for Ram, he fled; my eye has not seen him again

These are words of truth, and if they are a lie you may surely kill me.

He is from Abiram’s family and in his love he is twisting his words

His tongue speaks falsehoods and his face testifies to his lies

Not with the hand of one man was Tubal struck a winning blow

Roughly twenty men fought and killed a single soul

And the voice of his blood cries out to the prince, it will not give you rest

64 Num. 5:14 וְרַע מֵאָדָם וַתַּעֲבֹר יָוָן וְלֹא רֵאָאָה "and the spirit of jealousy comes upon him’; see also Num. 5:30.

65 This forms a rhyming couplet with the next line, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘fly/die’ (3.1.176–7).


67 Gen. 4:10 כָּל דָּמֵי שְׁאֵם אֶל מִן הָאֲדָמָה "the voice of your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground’ (referring to Abel, who has just been killed by his brother Cain).

68 Isa. 62:7 לָא תִּתְּנֻתוֹ מִדֶּרֶךְ ואַל תִּתְּנְ עָיִן לָהוּ "and do not give him rest’.

Ram and Joel
Ram killed me, and Ram's blood must be spilled like my blood'.

The Prince

Tubal struck Meroth and Ram struck Tubal.

And on whose head is the bloodguilt? Who should be brought to slaughter?

Abiram

And the voice of Meraioth's blood cries out bitterly from the ground.

'Not my friend Ram, who destroyed the murderer
For he acted as a judge in his zeal and this is his only sin.'

The Prince

Because of this sin of his which is not large

We pronounce this judgement, that he shall go into exile

The blows of your hand, men of violence, have brought down many victims

Including my flesh and blood, wallowing in blood in the road

Indeed I impose a ransom upon you and set a large fine

So that you might smite your thigh and wail over my dead one

69 This forms a rhyming couplet with the next line, mirroring Shakespeare's 'Mercutio/owe' (3.1.184–5).
70 Gen. 4:10 'the voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground' (referring to Abel, who has just been killed by his brother Cain); Zeph. 1:14 'the voice of the day of the Lord, wherein the mighty man cries bitterly'.
71 This forms a rhyming couplet with the next line, mirroring Shakespeare's 'friend/end' (3.1.186–7).
72 This speech is composed of six rhyming couplets, mirroring Shakespeare's 'offence/hence', 'proceeding/a-bleeding', 'fine/mine', 'excuses/abuses', 'haste/last', 'will/kill' (3.1.188–99).
73 Ps. 39:11 (39:10 in English Bibles) 'from the blows of Your hand'.
74 Prov. 7:26.
75 Gen. 29:14; 2 Sam. 19:13, 14 (19:12, 13 in English Bibles).
76 2 Sam. 20:12 'wallowing in blood in the middle of the road'.
77 Jer. 31:19 'I smote my thigh' (in grief).
Prayers I shall not hear, like a deaf man; I shall not have mercy on wickedness

And rivers of tears and beseeching cannot erase a crime

And as for you, do not entreat me, do not raise a voice of wailing

Ram shall surely be exiled, or let his blood be upon his own head.

Remove the slain man's bones from here and take instruction from the matter of the strife

And know that he who has mercy on a murderer is like one who ends a life maliciously.

(Exeunt)

scene 2  A chamber in Abiel's house

JAEL

Hurry, chariot of the sun, complete the day's cycle

Who would brandish a whip at horses of fire while the wheels rise like a storm

Because the sun strives for its shelter, for its tent at the end of the day

And we yearn for the night, for the night that attends to lovers

For it unfurls the veil that is spread over all faces

So that Ram might come to embrace me when no eye sees.

78 Jer. 9:18 (9:19 in English Bibles).
79 Ezek. 33:4 'his blood shall be upon his own head'.
80 Gersonides to 1 Kings 1:50.
81 Cf. Shakspeare's 'Phaeton' (3.2.3); as usual, Salkinson has removed the Classical mythological reference.
82 Cf. Shakespeare's 'Phoebus' (3.2.2), i.e., Apollo, the Greco-Roman sun god.
83 Isa. 25:7 ‘and the veil which is spread over all the nations’.
Lovers wait for the season of night, saying, no eye will see us. In their beauty they see light, so what use have they for the light of the sun? Love is struck by blindness, and the night suits it. Therefore I call to you, O night, to teach me the way of women.

For as a dark yet comely woman you are full of knowledge. To teach me to acquire a master over me for the price of my pure virginity. But cover my face with a veil, for it reddens from shame. Until little by little I learn to know a man.

If one does something and repeats it, he is given his due in the end: Come to me tonight, come to me, Ram, my chosen one. You are a shining light, you are my sun in my darkness. Like snow on a raven’s back, so you rest on the wings of night. Please come, night of my desire and bring me Ram. And when his time comes and he is taken away, cut him into pieces. And set the pieces in the wheel so that they might shine like the stars in the firmament. And from that day onwards all men

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84 Job 24:15 ‘no eye will see me’.
85 Song of Songs 1:5 ‘I am dark yet comely’.
86 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘when I shall die’ (3.2.21); Salkinson’s version lacks the double-entendre present in the source text (see Weis 2012: 249, note 21).
Will love night more than day,  
for they will rejoice in the stars of light.

And will no longer bow down  
to the sun; they will surely scorn it. –

Now I have bought an abode of love but have not dwelled in it

I have been placed like clay in the potter’s hand but he has not made me into a vessel

Like the length of the night to a child before a day of feasting and gladness

Whose parents have made a new coat of many colours for him

But he cannot wear it before the appointed time arrives

That is how long this day is to me – but my nurse approaches me

And her mouth is full of news and every mouth which mentions Ram’s name

Speaks as clearly in my ears as an interceding angel on high.

(The nurse enters with ropes in her hand)

What do you have to say, my nurse? What are those in your hand?

Are they the ropes which Ram commanded you to bring?

They are the ropes to be hanged on – (Throws them to the ground)

87 Liturgical poem sung at the Yom Kippur evening service ‘like clay in the potter’s hand’. Cf. Jer. 18:4 ‘and the vessel which he was making from the clay was ruined in the potter’s hand’.

88 Esther 9:17, 18.


90 Job 33:23.
JAEL: Woe is me! What has happened to us? Why do you wring your hands?

THE NURSE: Woe unto us this day! He is dead, he is dead, he is dead!

JAEL: Woe is us, for we are done for! We are done for, done for, my lady!

Cursed be this day! He has fallen, slain, dead!

JAEL: Could such wrath, such cruelty come forth from the heavens?

THE NURSE: Not from the heavens, but rather from Ram’s hand it has come forth Who would have said to us that Ram would do such a thing –

Oh, son of Abiram!

JAEL: What do you have against me, cursed woman, that you have come to afflict me today?

You are speaking like one of the daughters of Sheol, killing me with the breath of your lips.

Has Ram laid a hand on himself? Tell me if it is so And that word will be like a sharp sword adding to the slain ones Life and death are in the power of the tongue, in the power of a single word Say the word and it will bring me down into the pit of destruction.

THE NURSE: I saw his wound, my eyes saw the wound

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91 Isa. 11:4 רָשָׁע יָמִית שְׂפָתָיו וּבְר֥וּחַ ‘and with the breath of his lips he will kill the wicked’.
92 Prov. 18:21 בְּיַד־לָשׁ֑וֹן וְ֭חַיִּים מָ֣וֶת ‘death and life are in the power of the tongue’.
93 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘no/woe’ (3.2.50–1).
94 Ps. 55:24 (55:23 in English Bibles) שַׁ֗חַת לִבְאֵ֬ר׀ תּוֹרִדֵ֬ם אֱלֹהִ֨ים וְאַתָּ֤ה ‘and You, God, will bring them down into the pit of destruction’.
A bleeding wound\(^95\) in his flesh, at his mighty heart

The whiteness of his face was like ash, and his tunic was rolled in blood\(^96\)

Slain by the sword,\(^97\) slain, dead, a corpse, a corpse trampled underfoot.\(^98\)

All this my eyes saw, until agony seized me.\(^99\)

JAEL

Split, my heart, into pieces; crumble, all my bones

It is too much for you to see, my eyes; let me alone, breath of my nose

For a clod of dust\(^100\) like me establish a gravestone as a memorial\(^101\)

For what else is my desire, except to lie with him in the coffin.

THE NURSE

Tubal, Tubal, my friend, Tubal, chief among those who ever loved me!

How pleasant you were to me, how honourable you were, honourable man,

Is it for this that I have lived so many days, to see your death?

JAEL

What is this storm that is coming from the other side?

Has Ram been killed and Tubal is also dead?

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\(^95\) Isa. 1:6.

\(^96\) Isa. 9:4 (9:5 in English Bibles).

\(^97\) Num. 19:16.

\(^98\) Isa. 14:19.

\(^99\) 2 Sam. 1:9. See Ithiel, Fourth Part, note 10 for a different use of this citation.

\(^100\) Job 7:5.

\(^101\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘here/bier’ (3.2.59–60).
Tubal is my age and my brother, and Ram is the beau of my youth. So why does the trumpet not sound that the day of dread has come? Who is still living, if they have both gone and are no more?

THE NURSE Tubal was struck down and is dead, whereas Ram, who struck him down, will surely go into exile.

JAEL Did Ram's hand spill Tubal's blood? The nurse: Did Ram's hand spill Tubal's blood? Jael: His hand did this, his hand spilled the blood.

JAEL Oh, serpent's heart, while the face is the face of a beloved man. Who has seen such a viper's den in the form of a palace like your body? A beautiful-eyed cruel man, an adversary and enemy in the likeness of an angel's face. A raven in a dove's feathers, a mauling wolf in a ewe's skin. An evil beast from the woods in the image of the face of God. You are the opposite in the heart from your outward appearance.

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102 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.2.66); see First Part, note 65.
103 Jer. 3:4.
104 Dan. 10:11, 19.
105 Isa 11:8.
106 1 Sam. 16:12.
107 Esther 7:6.
108 1 Sam. 16:7 "man sees the outward appearance, but the LORD sees the heart".
An honourable holy man of the Lord on the outside, while your insides are an abomination of desolation.

How has the Rock taken dust from the earth of paradise and wondrously made your body glorious like the seal of perfection?

And afterwards blown breath into your nostrils from the valley of the dead – Who has seen a book full of devouring words?

In a gold embroidered handkerchief? How in a tower of strength, In a temple where everyone speaks of glory can there dwell such deceit as this?

There is no more confidence, for all men are liars.

There is no truth, there is no faith, the faithful have vanished from among the sons of men.

All speak lies, all swear falsely All are hypocrites – but hurry, my servant, where are you? Hurry, sustain me with a raisin cake – all the woes and distresses and groaning

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109 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘saint’ (3.2.79).
110 Dan. 11:31.
111 A name for God; see Deut. 32:4.
112 Ezek. 28:12.
113 Ps. 52:6 (52:4 in English Bibles).
114 Judg. 9:51; Ps. 61:4 (61:3 in English Bibles); Prov. 18:10.
115 Ps. 29:9 (29:8 in English Bibles): ‘and in His temple everyone speaks of glory’.
116 Ps. 116:11.
117 Ps. 12:2 (12:1 in English Bibles).
118 Song of Songs 2:5 (2:4 in English Bibles): ‘sustain me with raisin cakes’. Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘give me some aquavitae’ (3.2.88).
They have all come upon me, and I have grown old before my old age

May disgrace descend upon Ram!

May your tongue rot in your mouth for this curse of yours

Disgrace will not descend upon Ram, for it fears to approach him

Nothing but honour and splendour will crown him and a throne is prepared for him

Like a king who rules over all. – How foolish I was to revile his name!

Do you honour the name of the one who murdered your brother? 119

Would I defame the name of my husband? Oh, my husband!

Who would bring your name upon his lips in honour and glory

When your wife on her wedding day mentions it with gnashing of teeth?

But why, villain, did you strike down my brother? 120

Admittedly, if you had not struck him down, my brother 121 the villain would have taken your life.

So therefore it is not in mourning that my eyes shed a tear

But rather, they are tears of joy and a time of dancing

119 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.2.96); see First Part, note 65.
120 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.2.100); see First Part, note 65.
121 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cousin’ (3.2.101); see First Part, note 65.
Because my husband lives, he whom Tubal sought to kill
And because Tubal is dead, he who sought to kill my husband
So why am I still weeping, why is my heart faint? 122
And I do not rejoice in my suffering which has befallen me so pleasantly?
But I heard another word, a word more bitter than Tubal’s death
And it is like a sword in my bones; 123 I cannot remove it from my heart
For it oppresses me like a lower millstone, 124 like a sin worthy of death 125
Which oppresses the heart of sinners: it is this evil word
That after Tubal’s death Ram is to go into exile.
This word pierces my kidneys 126 tens of thousands of times more than Tubal’s death
At the death of my brother Tubal, I find woe and sorrow 127 enough.
But if it is the way of woes for each one to love its fellow 128
And woe comes on top of woe, disaster on top of disaster
Why did the messenger stop when she gave me the tidings
That Tubal was dead, and not go on to say
That my father too was dead,  
or my mother, or even both  
of them?

But she said that Ram will surely  
go into exile

The word of this report, it is as if  
I had heard

That my father and mother and  
Tubal and Ram and Jael are all  
slain, dead.

'Ram will surely go into exile’ and  
Jael will be left as a widow  
whose husband is alive\(^\text{129, 130}\)

This is like a spear in my belly, my  
heart is pierced by an arrow

My destruction is as vast as the  
ocean; it cannot be measured,  
cannot be fathomed

There is not a word on my  
tongue\(^\text{131}\) to tell of my woe  
enough to explain it. –

Tell me, my nurse, where are my  
father and my mother?

THE NURSE  
They went to mourn for Tubal, to  
spill a tear over his blood  
And I shall take you to them, if  
you would go with me.

JAEL  
They spill their tears over the  
one who is going to his eternal  
home\(^\text{132}\)

Whereas I shall keep my tears  
for the one who is going down  
living to Sheol

\(^{129}\) 2 Sam. 20:3.  
\(^{130}\) This and the next three lines form two rhyming couplets, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘bound/sound’  
(3.2.125–6), except that Salkinson’s rhyme extends over four lines whereas Shakespeare’s is composed  
only of two.  
\(^{131}\) Ps. 139:4.  
\(^{132}\) While this does not rhyme with the last word on the next line visually or in Modern Hebrew  
pronunciation, it does form a near rhyme in Ashkenazic pronunciation, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘spent/  
banishment’ (3.2.130–1).
Take the ropes away from here, the ropes which are as humiliated as me.

For they were brought in order to become a ladder, to raise up Ram to my palanquin.

And they groan with me, for Ram is going into exile.

Please bring me to my bed, where I hoped to become a man's wife.

But there I shall perish, I shall die a virgin widow.

She shall not be wife to Ram, but rather to death.

**THE NURSE**

Come on, come into your room and I shall bring comfort to you.

You will see Ram tonight, because I know where he is.

He is hiding in the priest's chamber; I shall go and bring him to you.

**JAEAL**

Go, seek him and give him my ring.

Tell him that he must visit me before he goes and is no more.

*(Both exit)*

**THIRD SCENE  The priest's chamber (Rezin and Ram)*

133 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare's 'beguiled/exiled' (3.2.132–3).

134 This forms a near rhyme with the following two lines, which themselves comprise a rhyming couplet; cf. Shakespeare's 'bed/widowed' (3.2.134–5).

135 Due to the fact that the rhyme scheme in this speech is different in Salkinson's version than in Shakespeare's, this final line does not rhyme with anything, whereas in the source text the last two lines form a rhyming couplet 'bed/maidenhead' (3.2.136–7).

136 This and the following three lines form an ABAB rhyme, mirroring Shakespeare's 'night/cell/knight/farewell' (3.2.140–3).
Approach me, Ram, approach me, 
*misfortunate man.*

Misfortune and destruction pursue you, and the hand of love is upon you for ill

You call grief ‘my sister’, and woe ‘the wife of my covenant’.

Of what would you inform me, my father? What is the prince’s judgement?

Is there another new woe that desires me

Of which I do not know thus far?

Are you lacking in woes? – Listen to me, my dear son

For I shall inform you of what has been decreed upon you from the mouth of the prince.

What is the decree, if not a decree equal to a death sentence?

The prince has lightened your sentence for he has had mercy upon you

You shall not go into the valley of the shadow of death, but rather into exile.

Be merciful to me and say death, and do not mention to me the word exile

The valley of the shadow of death would be better for me than wandering in exile

The name of exile is dreadful and terrible, and more bitter to me than the bitterness of death.

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137 Jer. 22:30.
138 Ps. 23:4.
139 Ps. 23:4.
140 1 Sam. 15:32.
You have only been banished from the city of Verona, therefore do not fear. For the land is spacious, and you still have hope.

All the earth outside of the city of Verona is formless and void\(^\text{141}\) as burning fire in hell.

It can be considered as Sheol and destruction,\(^\text{142}\) as burning fire in hell.

And if I am banished from the city of Verona to settle in some place, you have been banished from the land of the living to settle like a dead man in the grave.

And you cut off my head today with a golden axe, and raise your voice in laughter saying that you are merciful.

Does one who has been treated mercifully scorn mercy? Does the one who has been treated compassionately mock compassion?

Why, you have committed a sin worthy of death\(^\text{143}\) because you spilled blood.

But the prince delights in kindness;\(^\text{144}\) he has given you the chance to flee.

So that you might save yourself as in one of the cities of refuge\(^\text{145}\).

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**Notes:**

- \(\text{141}\) Gen. 1:2; Jer. 4:23.
- \(\text{142}\) Prov. 15:11. Cf. Shakespeare's 'purgatory' (3.3.18), which does not have a direct biblical parallel.
- \(\text{143}\) Deut. 21:22.
- \(\text{144}\) Mic. 7:18.
- \(\text{145}\) This refers to the six cities set aside under biblical law as places of asylum to which perpetrators of manslaughter could flee (Num. 35:11, 13, 14).
Yet you do not recognize his kindness.

It is a furnace of affliction rather than mercy and kindness

Why, Jael lives here, and this city is like the garden of the Lord

And every creeping creature, abomination, and mouse, every unclean thing

Can walk to and fro in the garden and behold the pleasantness of her face

But Ram cannot set the sole of his foot here.

The flies are like honourable free men; they are free

To approach Jael, to take delight in the whiteness of her hands

And moreover at a suitable time during sleep, or even while awake,

They can steal in to kiss her mouth and to suck the pure honey of her lips

But Ram himself is trapped like a sinning soul in Sheol

He cannot enter the city, cannot approach her

The flies can approach and touch her, but Ram cannot approach

For he is driven out and chased off, and banishment and excommunication are upon him.

So how can you say that my exile is not my death?

Do you not have a cup of poison, or a sharp knife

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146 Isa. 48:10.
147 Lev. 5:2.
148 Gen. 3:8.
149 Deut. 2:5.
150 Zech. 12:2.
Or some instrument of death to kill me with one blow

And not to afflict my soul with exile, banishment, and excommunication

These dreadful judgements at whose mere mention

The ghosts tremble underneath and Sheol quakes at them?

Why, you are a holy man of God, a doctor for the illnesses of the soul

Who pardons iniquities for those who repent from sin and is also a faithful friend to me

How do you presume to crush me with such words?

rezin Senseless lad, listen to what I have to say too.

ram When you open your lips you will inform me further about exile.

rezin I shall give you oil and balm for the wound of exile

To be a remedy for you even as you go into exile

It is the balm of understanding and the precious oil from the spring of wisdom.

ram Again you have come to mention the matter of exile to me

What use have I for wisdom? Hang it up before the sun

Does it have the power to build me a new Verona

And to create another Jael, or to move the prince’s heart

151 Job 26:5.
152 Isa. 59:20.
153 Ezek. 27:17.
154 Isa 39:2.
155 Alshekh to Isa. 44.
156 Num. 25:4 and hang them up for the Lord before the sun'.
To remove the evil of the decree? 157 None of these is in its power

For wisdom has no advantage over folly? 158

Therefore listen to me and be silent, and you will be considered a wise man.

REZIN I know that madmen have ears but do not hear. 159

RAM Because the clear-sighted have eyes but do not see. 160

REZIN Come, let us consult together, Ram, regarding your position.

RAM Do not speak a word which you do not know yourself

And do not judge a man’s position until you arrive in his place. 161

If you were a young man like me and Jael’s soul was bound to your soul

And on this day, your wedding day, Tubal was struck down by your hand;

Your love was as strong as death 162 and it was decreed upon you to go into exile,

Then you would have the right to speak, to pull out the hair of your head

To wallow in the dust and to lie out flat, as I do here

To take my measure on the ground to be the measure of my grave.

157 This is based on Mishnah Avot 2:5 ‘and see that wisdom has an advantage over folly’.
158 Eccles. 2:13 ‘but repentance, prayer, and charity remove the evil of the decree’, from Unetane Toqef, a medieval composition forming part of the Rosh HaShanah (Jewish New Year) liturgy.
159 Jer. 5:21; Ps. 115:6.
160 Jer. 5:21; Ps. 115:5.
161 ‘and do not judge your fellow until you arrive in his place’.
162 ‘love is as strong as death’.
(Falls and lies out flat on the ground) (Sound of someone knocking outside)

Rezin

Behold, someone is knocking; arise and hide.

Ram

I shall not hide, unless my lament and sighing

Rezin

Cæzar thou must come forth, and I will put thee there

Rezin

Then and lies out flat on the ground

(Sound of someone knocking outside)

Rezin

Men are pounding on the door; hide lest you be caught –

Who knocks there? I’m coming at once –

Go quickly and hide in the library –

Who knocks there forcefully? Who are you there?

From where do you come, and what do you seek here?

The Nurse

(Outside)

Open up for me, and you will know who I am and what I have to say

Why, I come from the lady Jael.

Rezin

Come into the house in peace.

The Nurse

Tell me, man of God! Please tell me, holy man of the Lord!

Where is the lady’s husband? Where is the son of Abiram?

Rezin

He is lying in his tears there drunk, but not with wine.

The Nurse

He is like the lady, and the lady is also like him.

163 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘holy Friar’ (3.3.81).
164 Isa. 51:21 ‘drunk, but not with wine’.
They have one soul and one spirit and one heart.

Crying, wailing, and weeping; crying, wailing, and weeping –

Arise, my lord, stand up on your feet, be a man

Arise, Ram, for Jael, for her be a man

How have you fallen astoundingly and lie like a man without strength.

The nurse?!

My lord, my lord, this is my only comfort in my misery

That everything has an end; why, it is death.

Are you speaking about Jael? How is she now?

Does she regard me as a murderer, since I have spilled blood

The blood of her flesh and blood, and have turned our youthful joy into mourning?

Where, then, is she, the sorrowful one? What is she doing?

What does my secret wife say regarding our concealed love?

She says nothing, but has indeed been weeping all night

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165 Lam. 1:9 פְּלָאִים וַתֵּרֶד 'and she fell astoundingly'.
166 Ps. 88:5 (88:4 in English Bibles).
167 Prov. 5:11 (Arising) סִתְרִי 'your flesh and body' (used literally in this verse, but idiomatically in Salkinson's text).
168 Jer. 31:13 (Arising) אֶבְלָם וְהָפַכְתִּי 'and I shall turn their mourning into joy'.
169 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘cancelled’ (3.3.97), i.e., invalidated or annulled (Weis 2012: 264, note 97, and Crystal and Crystal 2002: 62); in Salkinson’s version, the love is concealed rather than invalidated.
She arises from the bed and falls and arises again.

Tubal, she says, and her eyes indeed shed tears
And then she cries out, Ram, and falls again.

**Ram**

My name is a lead bullet from a gun

Which has torn the covering of her heart, like my cursed hand

Which tore her brother’s heart. Tell me, righteous priest

In which part of my body my name resides?

So that I might destroy that abode which I had

**In my anger and my wrath.** (Draws his sword)

**Rezin**

Stay your hand, despairing man, empty-headed man with no sense

Are you a man? The form of your face is like that of a man

Yet the tears of your eyes say that you have become a woman

Your wrath is like a wild ass of a man, like the wrath of a beast of Lebanon

The soul of a beast of the forest in the likeness of a man’s face.

I am dismayed to see that it is thus for you, it would not be believed if it were told.

By the Temple service! Indeed you are inferior to what I had considered you to be until now

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170 Hosea 13:8: יָעֵינָהּ תִּדְמַע וְדָמֹעַ שְׂפָתֶיהָ עַל תַּﬠֲלֶה תּוּבַל, וַיִּזְﬠַק כֵּן וְאַחֲרֵי רֹבֶה מִקְּנֵה עֹפֶרֶת כַּדּוּר הַמִּטָּה מֵﬠַל תָּקוּם הַפַּﬠַם.

171 Jer. 32:31.

172 Job 11:12.

173 2 Chron. 25:18.

174 Ps. 50:10, 104:20.

175 Hab. 1:5.

176 This is a Talmudic oath (Even-Shoshan 2003, 4: 1334); Salkinson has Judaized Shakespeare’s overtly Catholic oath ‘by my holy order’ (3.3.113). Cf. Fifth Part, note 30.
You have already taken Tubal's life; do you mean to take your own as well?

And also take Jael's life, which is bound to yours.

For your life is her life, and with you she too will die.

Why do you curse your birth and profane earth and heavens?

As if you desired to shake yourself free from the three of them, even though they have all as one?

Been given to you as a blessing? Be ashamed and humiliated by your deeds.

Because you have covered the beauty of your face, your prodigious love, and your intellect.

With a great shame and disgrace which cannot be erased.

Indeed in intellect, good looks, and love you have ten shares.

Yet you do not know how to find advantage in one of them.

You are a miserly rich man and your money is of no benefit to you.

The beauty of your glorious face is like a wax mask.

It is beautiful to the eyes, but it has no spirit.

And as for your exceeding love for Jael which you swore to her on your life.

You swore it in vain and falsely, for with your hand you have killed her.

177 Gen. 2:4; Ps. 148:13.
178 2 Sam. 19:44 (19:43 in English Bibles).
And your intellect, which gloriously crowns your beauty and love

You have destroyed completely, like a vessel in which there is no pleasure\(^{179}\).

And it has become like gunpowder in a foolish soldier’s pouch

Which has gone forth like lightning\(^{180}\) and devoured its owner

So the light of your intellect has become a flame of consuming fire\(^{181}\).

Consuming not your enemies, but rather yourself.

Therefore awaken, son of Abiram! Gird your loins like a man\(^{182}\).

The graceful doe\(^{183}\) whom you love and for whom you are lying like a dead man

Is still alive! Remember this and rejoice, young man!

Tubal came to kill you, so you rose early and killed him\(^{184}\).

Remember this and rejoice, young man! According to the law of the land

You were condemned to death,\(^{185}\) but by the law of kindness\(^{186}\) you have been banished from the city

And you have had your life as a prize of war,\(^{187}\) remember this and rejoice, young man!


\(^{180}\) Zech. 9:14.

\(^{181}\) Joel 2:5.

\(^{182}\) Job 38:3, 40:7.

\(^{183}\) Prov. 5:19; see First Part, note 171.

\(^{184}\) Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 58a ‘if a man comes to kill you, rise early and kill him first’. This is a well-known principle in Jewish law.

\(^{185}\) 1 Sam. 20:31; 2 Sam. 12:5.

\(^{186}\) Prov. 31:26.

\(^{187}\) Jer. 39:18 and you shall have your life as a prize of war’.

\(^{188}\) Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 58a
Behold, you bear a bag of many blessings on your shoulders,
And everywhere you go kindness and love pursue you
But like a froward girl who gnashes and hisses with the abundance of everything
So you complain about your love and your happiness which is so great
Therefore I say, guard yourself, my friend
Because men who complain for nothing do not have a good end
Arise, go to the one whom your soul loves as discussed
Ascend to her, to the upper chamber, and speak words of comfort to her heart
But do not dawdle there lest the watchmen come
For they will not let you pass to the city of Mantua
And you will dwell in that city, until we find a favourable time
To announce at the gate of Bath-rabbim that your wedding was according to the law
And also to make peace between all those who quarrel with you
And to reconcile you to the prince so that he restores you to your position
Then your heart will swell from joy when you return to your native city
For the gladness will be twenty thousand times greater

188 Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.
189 Isa. 49:8.
190 Song of Songs 7:5 (7:4 in English Bibles). Bath-rabbim, which literally means 'daughter of many', is the name of one of the gates in the biblical city of Heshbon, mentioned in the same verse.
191 Esther 1:8, 4:16.
192 Isa. 41:12.
Than your sorrow on this day, the day when you depart for the city of refuge —

As for you, Nurse, depart before him and mention me to your lady

Tell her to act wisely and to hasten to send the members of the household to their beds

And they, out of sadness and sorrow, will be willing to obey her

For behold, Ram is coming.

**The Nurse**

Great in counsel? You have wisdom, counsel, and sound judgement

Here I would be willing to sit all night, for your words are pleasant

The sweetness of hearty counsel. — Why, you will come, won’t you, my lord Ram

I shall go to my mistress to tell her that you are coming.

**Ram**

Please act in accordance with your word, and tell her that I am prepared

To hear scolding from her mouth.

**The Nurse**

Take my lady’s ring, which she sent you as a token

But hurry and come, for the night is passing by.

**Ram**

By this my spirit lives, and my soul has returned to its strength.

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193 See note 145.
194 Jer. 32:19.
195 Prov. 8:14.
196 Prov. 27:9.

‘and the sweetness of a man’s friend by hearty counsel’.
REZIN

Now go in peace, be strong and courageous\(^{197}\) so that it may go well with you.

Before the morning dawns rise early and set out for Mantua

And if you do not rise early, disguise yourself in a woman’s garment\(^{198}\)

So that the watchmen do not recognize you. Meanwhile, I shall find one loyal to your house

By whose hand I may inform you from time to time

Everything that happens here until your desire comes to light.

Give me your hand and go in peace, for the appointed time has come.

RAM

And peace to you too. – If only the morning were not waiting there for my arrival

Through the lattice\(^{199}\) like a messenger of God in a vision\(^{200}\)

My heart would not allow me to part from you in haste.

(Exeunt)

FOURTH SCENE  Abiel’s house (Abiel and his wife with Paris)

ABIEL

Many woes have engulfed us and we have not seen relief thus far

And we have not found a favourable time\(^{201}\) for our daughter to be spoken for\(^{202}\)

\(^{197}\) Deut. 31:7, 23; Josh. 1:6, 7, 9, 18; 1 Chron. 22:13.

\(^{198}\) There is no basis for this in the source text, nor in the Schlegel-Tieck German translation.

\(^{199}\) Judg. 5:28.

\(^{200}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘me/thee’ (3.3.172–3). Note that Salkinson’s rhyme is in the last two lines of the speech, whereas Shakspeare’s is in the first two.

\(^{201}\) Isa. 49:8

\(^{202}\) Song of Songs 8:8.
Her spirit is bitter over Tubal, who was of her age and family. And I also loved him, but man's end is to die. You will not see my daughter tonight, for she will not come out of her room. And if you were not here, I would also already be in bed. For it is close to midnight.

_Pleasant words_ in a time of distress are words not in their time. Take my blessing, my lady, and lie down, and may your sleep be sweet. And tomorrow mention me to your daughter.

So I shall do in accordance with your word, and tomorrow in the morning I shall ask her consent. For at this time we are all desolate and it is bitter for her.

Listen to me, Lord Paris, indeed my daughter's desire is as mine. For she obeys my command, therefore I am prepared to give her to you. For the one to whom I give her, I know that she will be his. Go, my wife, to her chamber before you go to your bed. And tell her the desire of my son Paris' heart.

203 Eccles. 12:10.
204 Prov. 3:24 'you shall lie down and your sleep shall be sweet'.
205 Gen. 24:57 'and we shall ask her consent'.
For Wednesday – have you been listening to me?

Wednesday is – but wait What is today?

PARIS

Today is Monday.

ABIEL

Wednesday is not suitable, for it is close

But Thursday will be the day of her wedding

On that very day she will be wed to this lord

But what do you say, are you prepared for Thursday

Or do you desire to delay the appointed time? The number of wedding guests

Will be very small for us, two or three friends, not more

Lest those who talk say: we are holding a banquet and festival

And not paying heed to Tubal, our flesh and blood, who is dead, 206 who is dead, 206 who is dead

Therefore let six or seven guests gather and that will be enough for us.

Speak, dear Paris, is Thursday good in your eyes?

PARIS

What can I say: if only Thursday were tomorrow.

ABIEL

Now go in peace and Thursday will be the day.

Speak, my wife, with Jael, before you go to your bed

So that she may know that Thursday is to be her bridal day.

206 Gen. 29:14 "my flesh and blood"; also 2 Sam. 19:13, 14 (19:12, 13 in English Bibles).
Go in peace, my lord – bring a light to the bedroom

The night has almost passed; soon we will see the dawn;

Go, lie down in peace.

(All exit)

Scene 2

The lattice of Jael’s upper chamber, which overlooks the vineyard
(Ram and Jael)

Dawn has not yet broken; would you go now?

The voice which rings in your ears is the voice of the nightingale

Which gives its songs in the night from the pomegranate tree there

And not the voice of the bird which twitters in the early morning

As you thought in your fear.

Believe me, my beloved

It is the voice of the nightingale, and the night is yet long.

It is the voice of the bird that awakens the dawn

And not the voice of the nightingale; look, beloved of my soul

Over there white spots, because they are jealous of us,

Assemble like a wreath on the edges of the clouds in the east

207 Sic; should read ‘Scene 5’.
208 Job 35:10, בַּלָּֽיְלָה זְמִירָּות יְצַלְצֵל אֲשֶׁר הַקּוֹל הַזָּמִיר מֵﬠֵץ ‘the one who gives songs in the night’.
209 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘lark’ (3.5.2). The Hebrew term עפרוני ‘lark’ is a modern innovation (Even-Shoshan 2003, 4: 1407) which was not yet standard in Salkinson’s time; given the lack of a precise equivalent for the English, Salkinson has chosen to provide a description of the lark’s characteristics.
The nighttime candles have gone out and the dawn is leaping over the mountains.\(^{210}\)

If I move on from here, I shall not die, but if I stay, I shall not live.\(^{211}\)

JAEL I know that that light is not the light of morning

It is a burning torch which the sun has spewed out

To be a lamp unto your feet\(^{212}\) tonight to guide you on the way to Mantua

Therefore stay yet with me, for it is not time to leave.

RAM Here I stand, and when they find me and kill me

I shall die with a glad heart, because I have stayed here at your desire

And now I say, the white spots over there

Are not the eyelids of dawn,\(^{213}\) moreover the voice which I heard Twittering in the firmament above our heads is the voice of the nightingale

And not the voice of the bird which sings the morning song\(^{214}\)

And indeed I also long to stay with you rather than to go from here.

The morning has not come, let us take our fill of love,\(^{215}\) my love,\(^{216}\) in the darkness.\(^{217}\)

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\(^{210}\) Song of Songs 2:8.

\(^{211}\) Salkinson has not replicated Shakespeare’s rhyming couplet ‘die/I’ (3.5.11–12) shared between the last line of this speech and the first line of the next.

\(^{212}\) Ps. 119:105ךָ֑דְבָרֶ֑ נֵר־לְרַגְלִ֥י

‘Your word is a lamp unto my feet’.

\(^{213}\) Job 3:9, 41:10 (41:18 in English Bibles). Salkinson has omitted Shakespeare’s ‘tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia’s brow’ (3.5.20) here, in keeping with his usual domesticating treatment of Classical references.

\(^{214}\) Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘that is not the lark’ (3.5.21); see note 209.

\(^{215}\) Prov. 7:18.

\(^{216}\) Song of Songs 1:9, 15, 2:2, 10, 13, 4:1, 7, 5:2, 6:4.

\(^{217}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘day/away’ (3.5.25–6).
Flee, my love, the sun is peering through the lattice.

And moreover the voice of the bird is a voice that tears the ear and heart.

It always used to have a beautiful voice and play well.

But now I take no pleasure in it, because it has become the sound of the trumpet.

The sound of destruction and trembling, which comes to separate those who cleave together.

But the dawn is growing lighter on the mountain and the lowlands.

Hurry, hasten to Mantua and do not let yourself die.

It is a pillar of cloud to me, a cloud of darkness and gloom.

The day has darkened over me and morning has turned into the shadow of death for me.

Jael!

My nurse?

Guard yourself Jael, your lady mother is about to come into the chamber.

The sun goes forth over the land and my lord Ram has not yet left.

Please come, light of day, and leave, light of my soul, from my window.

218 Song of Songs 2:9.
219 Ezek. 33:32: ‘a beautiful voice and plays well’.
220 This and the next three lines form an ABAB rhyming pattern, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘affray/day’, ‘grows/woes’ (3.5.33–6) except that the latter is composed of two rhyming couplets.
221 This refers to the pillar of cloud in which God travelled alongside the Israelites after their exodus from Egypt (Exod. 13:21; mentioned also in Num. 12:5; Deut. 31:15; Ps. 99:7; Neh. 9:12).
222 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘about/out’ (3.5.40–1).
On my only life! Jael, my flesh and blood.\(^{223}\), \(^{224}\)

I shall but kiss you this once and leave, for this is my only recompense. \(\text{(Exits from the window)}\)

Will you leave, will you forsake me now, my beau, the husband of my youth.\(^{225}\)

Will you not make known to me how you are faring every day at every hour

For every hour in my love will be in my eyes like many days

And therefore you will find upon your return that I have grown old, advanced in years.\(^{226}\)

Trust in me, the one whom my soul loves,\(^{227}\) when I find the opportunity

I shall not desist from asking how you are faring and from making known to you how it goes with me.

Do you think that you will return to me and I shall see your face again?

I trust that we shall see relief, and that this woe and distress\(^{228}\)

Will become for us in the coming days good and sweet discourse.

Yet my heart tells me terrible things; God’s terrors array themselves against me.\(^{229},^{230}\)

\(^{223}\) Gen. 29:14; 2 Sam. 19:13, 14 (19:12, 13 in English Bibles).

\(^{224}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘descend/friend’ (3.5.42–3).

Note, however, that in Salkinson’s version the couplet is contained within Ram’s two-line speech, whereas in Shakespeare’s it is split between Romeo (whose speech consists of a single line) and Juliet.

\(^{225}\) Joel 1:8

\(^{226}\) Josh. 23:2.

\(^{227}\) Song of Songs 1:7, 3:1, 2, 3.

\(^{228}\) This and the next line form a rhyming couplet. There is no precedent for this in the source text ‘serve/come’ (3.5.52–3).

\(^{229}\) Job 6:4.

\(^{230}\) This and the next three lines form an ABBA rhyming sequence, which partially mirrors the source text’s ‘soul/low’ (3.5.54–5), except that the latter consists of a single rhyming couplet. (‘Soul/low’ was considered a workable rhyme in Shakespeare’s day; see Weis 2012: 420.)
For as you have descended and stand at the bottom of the steps

Your face looks to me like a dead man, like a slain man lying in the valley of slaughter.

And I do not know whether your face has grown pale, or my eyes have deceived me.

Such a thing I too have seen in your face from where I stand.

Trembling has gripped me and I do not know what is wrong with me.

This is nothing but sorrow, sucking our lifeblood.

Live, my soul's beloved! And may the merciful father have mercy upon us.

(Exits through the vineyard)

Men say that the prince of fortune is lucky

He is fickle and strange and trifling, frivolous in doing good and evil.

If so, what could he have to do with my husband, a man who stands by his opinion.

Indeed luck is quick to do good and quick to pour out its anger.

It has pushed him away in its rage and will restore him in accordance with its desire.

Jaél: Men say that the prince of fortune is lucky
He is fickle and strange and trifling, frivolous in doing good and evil.
If so, what could he have to do with my husband, a man who stands by his opinion.
Indeed luck is quick to do good and quick to pour out its anger.
It has pushed him away in its rage and will restore him in accordance with its desire.

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232 This and the next three lines form two rhyming couplets, mirroring Shakespeare's 'you/adieu' (3.5.58–9) except that the latter consists of a single rhyming couplet (which makes up the whole of the speech). Salkinson has expanded the speech by two lines, but has not altered the meaning in any significant sense.
233 Isa. 21:4.
Is it my mother’s voice?

Has she risen from her bed, or has she not lain down tonight

I cannot know what her desire is at such a time.

(Abiel’s wife enters)

What is wrong with you, Jael?

I am not well, my mother.

How long will you mourn over Tubal’s death?

If you wash his flesh in your tears indeed he will not arise

Therefore give yourself respite, do not shed tears in vain.

Mourning according to the measure is a sign of great love

But mourning in excess of the measure is a sign of little intellect.

The destruction is too great to bear, so how can I not mourn?

Your mourning will not benefit the one for whom you mourn

For one who goes down into the silence of the grave knows nothing.

My heart knows my bitterness of spirit; I cannot restrain myself

Therefore I indeed weep over my friend’s destruction.

Not over his death, my daughter, does your eye stream relentlessly

[234 Lam. 2:18 כְּלָל ‘give yourself no respite’.]

[235 Lam. 3:49 מְַﬠָט ‘my eye flows and does not cease, relentlessly’]
But rather over the villain who killed him and still lives.

JAEL Who is the villain, my mother?

ABIEL'S WIFE He is the villain Ram.

JAEL (To herself) He is as far from a villain as the east is far from the west –

(To her mother) God will pardon him, and I have already forgiven him

Although there is no man who pains my heart as he does.

ABIEL'S WIFE Because he is a killer.

JAEL How great is my desire that others' hands not touch him

But rather that he fall into my hand to do with him in accordance with my desire

To exact vengeance from him and to redeem my brother's spilled blood.

ABIEL'S WIFE Do not fear, my daughter, behold, we shall find an opportunity

To take revenge against him, but cease crying

Behold, I shall send to Mantua, where the murderer has gone into exile

And there is a man known to us there who will give him the cup of our wrath to drink

And he too will go to the place where Tubal went, to be with him

236 Cf. Shakespeare's 'cousin' (3.5.86); see First Part, note 65.
237 Isa. 51:22 'the cup of my wrath'; see also Isa. 51:17.
Then you will see and shine, and your eye will be sated with our enemy.

My eye will not be sated with Ram until I see him dead.

For the death of my flesh and blood does not give me rest.

And now if you have a man, a loyal messenger to send I shall prepare cup of poison to give to Ram to drink and when he tastes of it he will sleep and awaken no more.

How bitter is my heart when I hear the name of Ram from a mouth other than my own.

And I cannot find a way to calm the fire of my zeal against him.

And to atone for the blood, the blood of my brother whom I love.

Prepare the poison of death and I shall send the messenger of death.

And now listen to me, my daughter, for there are good tidings in my mouth.

Good tidings are welcome at such a time of distress.
But what is the message? Tell me, my lady mother.

**Abiel’s wife**
You know that your father seeks your wellbeing and your good all the days

And he has sought and found a fitting day to turn your mourning into joy. It is the day which you have not expected, and which had not entered my mind either.

**Jael**
If only it were a good day, but which is it?

**Abiel’s wife**
This coming Thursday in the morning

A young man, praiseworthy in grace, beauty, and wealth will come to our house

He is Lord Paris, a rod from the stem of the prince

And he will take you to the Temple of Michael the Prince of the Presence

As a resplendent and joyful bride, to enter into a covenant with you there.

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246 Jer. 31:13 'and I shall turn their mourning into joy'.
247 Isa. 11:1 'a rod from the stem of Jesse' (a messianic prophecy referring to a king of the Davidic line).
248 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘church’ (3.5.114). Salkinson’s version refers to the Temple in Jerusalem, which was destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE but has remained the symbolic heart of the Jewish people and religion until the present day and is recalled on multiple occasions in the daily liturgy. See also note 250.
249 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Saint Peter’ (3.5.114). The angel Michael is mentioned in various places in the Hebrew Bible (most famously in the Book of Daniel) as well as in rabbinic literature (Midrash Rabbah 2:20) as God’s right-hand ministering angel. However, this specific phrase ‘Michael, the Prince of the Presence’ is a reference to the extremely prominent exegetical work of the eleventh-century scholar Rashi, as his commentary on the book of Isaiah (63:9) is the most well-known Jewish source in which this particular wording appears. Jews traditionally study the Hebrew Bible together with Rashi’s commentary, and therefore this reference would have been immediately recognizable to Salkinson’s audience. While the Archangel Michael also has a place in various Christian traditions, appearing in the Book of Revelation (12:7–9) as one of the leaders of God’s army against Satan and revered in later Christian theology, the conscious decision to employ the precise phrasing from Rashi’s commentary underscores the fact that Salkinson intended his translation for a Jewish readership.
By the name of the Temple!^{250}

And by the name of Michael the Prince of the Presence!^{251}

Indeed he shall not take me as a joyous bride to enter into a covenant with him

Such knowledge is too wondrous for me;^{252} why should I hurry to marry the man

Before he has told me that he desires me

And before he has asked me whether I desire him.

Please, my lady mother, tell my father these words

I am tender in years and my time has not yet come

And if my day comes I shall marry Ram, whom I hate,

Rather than marry Paris his chosen one – these are my tidings.

Tidings for tidings.

Behold, your father is coming; tell him what you have to say

And afterwards see what tidings there are for you.

(Abiel and the nurse)

After the sun goes down, the heavens let drops of dew fall

But since my brother’s son went down, the rain has been flooding relentlessly

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250 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘church’ (3.5.116); this expression refers even more unambiguously than the previous one (see note 248) to the Temple in Jerusalem; the collocation is a postbiblical one that is used invariably in this capacity, in contrast to the single word מִקְדָּשׁ appearing above, which could theoretically simply mean ‘sanctuary’.

251 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Saint Peter’ (3.5.116); see note 249.

252 Ps. 139:6.
The water still floods through your waterspouts, my daughter

Like a flowing brook and does not deceive. Behold, your body is small

Yet it contains within it water and a storm wind and a ship

The waters of your eyes that go to and fro resemble the sea

Your groaning a storm wind, and your soul a storm-tossed ship

On these salty waters, and in the absence of one to turn the storm to calm

Your ship circles and sways and is broken in the heart of the sea. –

Have you told her, my wife, the matter that we have decided?

The water still floods through your waterspouts, my daughter

Like a flowing brook and does not deceive. Behold, your body is small

Yet it contains within it water and a storm wind and a ship

The waters of your eyes that go to and fro resemble the sea

Your groaning a storm wind, and your soul a storm-tossed ship

On these salty waters, and in the absence of one to turn the storm to calm

Your ship circles and sways and is broken in the heart of the sea. –

Have you told her, my wife, the matter that we have decided?

Abiel’s wife

She answered to thank you but that she will not be able to fulfil your desire

Leave this foolish girl, let the grave and not a man take her.

(She makes to exit)

Abiel

You have spoken well, my wife; I am going with you –

Does she not intend to marry and to thank us for our gracious act?

Does she not consider it a blessing, pride, and glory

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253 Prov. 18:4.
254 Hab. 2:3.
255 Ps. 107:29 'He turns the storm to calm'.
256 The Hebrew words for ‘grave’ and ‘man’ rhyme, creating an internal play on words lacking direct precedent in the source text.
That we have found for her a husband perfect in his graceful proportion\textsuperscript{257}

When she is not even fit to be a maidservant?

JAEEL

I cannot be proud because you have acted graciously towards me

I only desire to thank you for taking the trouble

How can I be proud of a matter which I hate

Even though I thank you for that which I hate

Since I know that you consider it to be good.

ABIEL

Who is this that I am hearing? Thinking too deep, too deep to fathom

Who could understand these 'I am proud and I desire to thank you

But nevertheless I am not proud, nor do I thank,

Even though I thank; listen to me, noble daughter\textsuperscript{258}

Do not continue to thank me, do not continue to be proud

Just prepare your heap of bones

Bone to bone, for Thursday morning

To go with Paris to the Temple of the Prince of the Presence\textsuperscript{259}

And if you refuse to go, I’ll drag you like an abominable branch\textsuperscript{260}

Like a corpse trampled underfoot,\textsuperscript{261} a sprawling carcass, shame of your father’s house!

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\textsuperscript{257} Job 41:4 (41:12 in English Bibles).

\textsuperscript{258} Song of Songs 7:2 (7:1 in English Bibles).

\textsuperscript{259} Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘Saint Peter’s church’ (3.5.154); see notes 248 and 249.

\textsuperscript{260} Isa. 14:19.

\textsuperscript{261} Isa. 4:19.
Abiel’s wife Be ashamed and humiliated by your words; have you lost your senses?

Jael But please, my father, on my knees I hereby bend

Please be kind enough to let me speak a word.

Abiel Hang yourself and be silent, false seed! Daughter of a perverse and rebellious woman!

What use have I for worn out rags, a filthy cloth like you?

Now choose: go out as a bride towards the groom

Or go out from my presence and I shall see you no more

Do not speak a word, do not give me a response

And do not open your mouth, lest I stretch out my upraised hand.

How we have erred in complaining that the Lord has withheld from us

Fruit of the womb apart from this one; now we have seen with our own eyes

That even this one is excessive for us, for she has become a curse

262 Isa. 57:4.
263 1 Sam. 20:30.
264 Jer. 38:12.
265 Isa. 64:5 (64:6 in English Bibles).
266 Cf. Shakespeare’s ‘get thee to church a’ Thursday’ (3.5.161). Salkinson’s Judaized equivalent is traceable to Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 59b ‘a groom towards a bride’ and Alshekh to Ps. 14 ‘he will go out as a groom towards a bride’.
267 Gen. 30:2. 'am I in place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?'
And not a blessing in our house – cursed be the villainous daughter!

The Nurse

May the God of the heavens pour His blessing upon her –

Abiel

What is wrong with you, wisest of women? Put a lock on your mouth

Make a speech over a cup of wine in the neighbour women’s houses

Abiel’s wife

Your heart is hot within you; that’s enough from you, my husband.

Abiel

My heart burns within me, and I am mad from the sight of my eye

Indeed by day or night, at twilight or in the morning

In the house or outside, while I am sitting alone or in company

Whether waking or sleeping, I have thought only one thing

When will I succeed in my desire to marry her off

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268 Ps. 39:4 (39:3 in English Bibles) 'my heart was hot within me'.
And after I found a man after my own heart, from a family of princes

A man of wealth and riches, tender in years yet great in wisdom.

He is also a mighty man of valour, with beautiful eyes and a comely appearance.

For he is perfect in his splendour – after all these things

This daughter of my sorrow dares, between her groans, to say 'I shall not take this blessing, I am tender in years, The time of love has not arrived, and I cannot marry

Forgive me my father, for I do not desire him'

And I say to you, if you refuse to marry

I forgive you in accordance with your word, but go graze in such place as you can find;

You shall not live with me in the house. Look what is before you

Consider again, for I am not accustomed to jesting

Behold, Thursday is close; pay heed and take counsel

If you are to be my daughter then I shall give you to the man of my choice

269 1 Sam. 13:14 'a man after his own heart'.
270 Sifre to Deut. 1; Genesis Rabbah 50; Rashi to Gen. 41.
271 1 Sam. 16:12.
272 Ezek. 16:14 'כִּלְבָב אִישׁ' 'for it was perfect through my splendour'.
273 This is a reference to Gen. 35:18, in which the matriarch Rachel names her second son 'Ben-oni' (lit. 'son of my sorrow') as she is dying in childbirth.
274 Ezek. 16:8.
275 Num. 14:20 'I have forgiven in accordance with your word'.
And if not, go hang yourself,  
or go from house to house.\textsuperscript{276}

And die of hunger on the city streets, for on my life!

I shall not be your father and I shall not give you a portion or inheritance\textsuperscript{277}

Of that with which God has graced me. Now know and believe

That I have not sworn falsely.

(Exits)

JAEL

Are there no merciful eyes in the heavens to see my pain

And the plague of my heart?\textsuperscript{278}

Oh, my mother, mother who gave me birth!

Do not cast me away! Postpone the wedding date

By a month, at least ten days,\textsuperscript{279} and if you will not do so for me

Put my bed in the grave of my brother Tubal

And there I shall lie with him on the day appointed for my wedding.

ABIEL’S WIFE

Do not entreat me for I shall not say a word

Do what is good in your eyes, for you are not my daughter.

(Exits)

JAEL

Oh, God! What shall I do, my nurse?

\textsuperscript{276} Tosefta Pe’a 4:8: \textit{מעבב על המתחים} ‘going from house to house’.

\textsuperscript{277} Gen. 31:14; Deut. 10:9, 12:12, 14:27, 29.

\textsuperscript{278} 1 Kings 8: 38 ‘the plague of his own heart’.

\textsuperscript{279} Gen. 24:55.
How can I escape from a snare in which I have been trapped like a bird?

Indeed, my husband is alive on the earth and my oath is a testimony on high

And as long as he still lives and has not ascended on high

Who can disallow my oath, who can undo the bond of my covenant?

Give me counsel, give me help in distress;

Will it issue from the Mouth Most High to plant snares at my feet,

To pursue dry straw, to harass a windblown leaf like me?

To whom can I turn now, from where will my help come?

Is there nothing, my nurse, is there nothing you can say to comfort me?

THE NURSE  Certainly there is, there is, but please listen to me:

Indeed Ram is shut up in exile and it is known in all the earth

That he does not dare to return to see you

And if he does indeed come, he will come only like a thief in secret.

In respect of which my counsel is to become wife to Lord Paris

For he is an honourable man and wondrously desirable

And indeed Ram next to him is only a potsherd next to gold

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280  Job 13:25 יָבֵ֣שׁ וְאֶת־קַ֖שׁ תַּﬠֲר֑וֹץ נִדָּ֣ף הֶﬠָלֶ֣ה  'will you harass a windblown leaf, and will you pursue dry straw?'

281  Ps. 121:1.

282  Isa. 12:5.
His eyes are burning torches and sparkle more than the eagle’s eyes

I have never seen anyone with such beautiful eyes as he

May God do thus to me if the second husband is not better than the first, and if it is not so in your eyes

Why the first one is dead, for even if he lives he is like a dead man to you, for he is of no benefit to you.

JAEL
Are you saying such things with all your heart?

THE NURSE
May God do thus to me and more also

If I have not said such things with all my heart and all my soul.

JAEL
Amen!

THE NURSE
What did you answer?

JAEL
Why, your counsel is marvellously good, and most marvellous

Go and say to my mother: because I have vexed my father

I shall go to the house of God to confess my iniquity

So that I may be forgiven.

THE NURSE
Thus you must do, as you have spoken; as for me, I am going.

(Exits)

JAEL
The primeval serpent speaks through her mouth, the enemy, oppressor of men’s souls

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283 1 Sam. 16:12.

284 This is part of a biblical oath formula appearing in 2 Sam. 3:35, 19:14 (19:13 in English Bibles); 1 Kings 2:23; 2 Kings 6:31.

285 This is the full oath formula mentioned in the preceding note.
Cursed by the Lord — and it has become a trifling matter in her eyes to deceive me

To violate the oath of covenant, for she also lashed out with her tongue

To scorn my husband’s name; a thousand times she said yesterday

That he cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, yet today he is a potsherd with the potsherds of the earth

I have had enough compassion, counsel, and sound wisdom from your mouth, my nurse

Here is the Rock of Divisions, for the partnership has been dissolved.

Now I shall go to the priest of God Most High

Perhaps he will help me to free me from my distress

And if not, my own hand will save me, to die in my blamelessness.

(Exits)

286 Job 28:16 ‘it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir’. Ophir is a region renowned in the Hebrew Bible for its wealth.

287 Isa. 45:9 ‘a potsherd with the potsherds of the earth’.

288 Prov. 8:14.

289 1 Sam. 23:28; this refers to the place where Saul was obliged to stop his ongoing pursuit of David and go to fight the Philistines. In some English Bible versions (e.g., Geneva Bible, King James Bible, New International Version) the name is not translated but appears in transliteration as Sela-hammahlekoth or similar.

290 Babylonian Talmud Gitin 59b.


292 This and the next line form a rhyming couplet, mirroring Shakespeare’s ‘remedy/die’ (3.5.242-3). This was a workable rhyme in Shakespeare’s day (Weis 2012: 420).